

increase the revenue as well as to ensure payment of outstanding dues.

- (iv) Special programmes like Foundation Day Celebrations, Integrated Children's Development Programmes, New Year's Special Programmes etc. have been put under sponsored category.

Doordarshan is continuously taking various steps to improve the professional standards in the presentation of programmes at the Kendra. Latest techniques from all quarters are being adopted for improvement in quality of presentation' coverage.

Telecast of regular programmes for handicapped persons

†2437. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether telecast of regular programmes for handicapped persons on Doordarshan is under consideration;
 (b) if so, by when it will be started; and
 (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) It has been intimated by Prasar Bharati that programmes relating to problems faced by handicapped persons are telecast by the regional Doordarshan Kendras from time to time. In the National Network, a news bulletin for the speech/hearing impaired is telecast every Sunday at 2.20 p.m. Also spots depicting the indomitable zest for leading a normal life by the handicapped, despite severe physical and other limitations are telecast in between the news bulletins.

- (c) does not arise.

Pay scales of Announcers-cum-Translators of Languages

2438. SHRI P. SOUNDARARAJAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

- (a) whether there is any difference in the scales of pay of Announcers-cum-Translators of Indian languages *vis-a-vis* foreign languages;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the reasons for the discrimination; and
- (d) whether Government will undo this injustice and give the same scale to Announcers-cum-Translators of all the languages?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, sir. Prasar Bharati have informed that Translator-cum-Announcers of Indian languages are in the pay scale of Rs. 6,500-10,500/- while Translator-cum-Announcers (Indian Nationals) of foreign languages are in the pay scale of Rs. 8,000-12,500/-.

(c) The reasons for difference in pay scale are given below:—

- (i) The duties of Translator-cum-Announcers (Indian Languages) are comparable with those of the Newsreader-cum-Translators in News Services Division/Regional News Units. Since the pay scale of Newsreader-cum-Translators in the entry grade is Rs. 6,500-10,500/-, the same pay scale has been prescribed for Translator-cum-Announcers (Indian Languages).
- (ii) There is scarcity of talent in Foreign Languages in India. To attract the talents from within and from outside India, higher pay scale is given to Translator-cum-Announcers (Foreign Languages) as a special incentive.
- (iii) For recruitment of Translator-cum-Announcers (Indian Languages), simple Degree is required as essential qualification, whereas for recruitment of Translator-cum-Announcers (Foreign Languages), first class Hons. Degree or high second class Degree (Pass Course) is an essential qualification.
- (iv) Translator-cum-Announcers (Indian Languages) are expected to have knowledge in Indian art and culture only, whereas

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for Translator-cum-Announcers (Foreign Languages) knowledge in both Indian and the targeted foreign country is essential.

(d) Prasar Bharati have informed that at present there is no such proposal to give same pay scales to Translator-cum-Announcers of all the languages.

DD'S proposal for production of serials

2439, SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Doordarshan has invited proposals for production of serials on the novels of Sahitya Academy Award winning writer from North East and also for the North East New Magazine from outside producers some months ago under commissioned category;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the said project has not been implemented till now and processing has also not started;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and by when it is likely to start; and

(d) how much fund is proposed for the said project?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The proposals received in this regard are under process in Prasar Bharati.

(d) An amount of Rs. 10.50 crores has been earmarked for the development of Radio and TV Software in the NE Region. This includes the cost of producing serials on the novels of Sahitya Academy Award winning writers and also for the North East Magazine programme.